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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Letter dated 30 June 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a declaration of the European Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community on the Middle East peace process, issued at Lisbon on 25 June 1992 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 35 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Fernando REINO
Ambassador of Portugal
Permanent Representative
to the United Nations

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ANNEX

Declaration of the European Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community on the Middle East peace process, issued at Lisbon on 25 June 1992

The European Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community reaffirms its support for the peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991, which provides a unique opportunity for peace. It is of paramount importance for the world and Europe in particular, which has an essential role to play in the political and economic stability of the region. The European Council pays a tribute to the commitment and perseverance of the co-sponsors as well as to the wisdom and courage displayed by the parties directly involved.

The European Council has taken note of the results of the election in Israel. It believes that these results, which are an illustration of the democratic tradition in Israel, will reinforce the peace process and the commitment to a just and lasting settlement. It hopes that the new Israeli Government, as well as the Arab parties involved, will seize the opportunity to negotiate a comprehensive peace.

The European Council recognizes that it is for the parties to the dispute to establish the terms of a settlement, which, to be effective, must be freely negotiated and agreed among them. But the European Council reiterates its belief that for an agreement to prove just and lasting it will have to be based on United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which enshrine the principle of land for peace. It should provide for the security of all States in the region, including Israel, within recognized and guaranteed borders, and for the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination.

The European Council reiterates the need for all parties to commit themselves to the peace process, to refrain from all acts of violence and to avoid any action likley to endanger the negotiations, or to threaten the climate of confidence. It hopes that the new Israeli Government and the Arab parties will act quickly to implement confidence-building measures. It looks forward to a halt to the building and expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, which are illegal under international law, and to full application of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The European Council also calls upon the members of the Arab League to lift the boycott of trade to Israel, which is incompatible with the spirit of the peace process.

The European Council reiterates the commitment of the European Economic Community and its member States to play a constructive and active role in the peace process, in both its bilateral and multilateral tracks, based on the Community's well-known positions of principle. Both Israel and her Arab neighbours can rely on Europe's commitment to building a future of peace and

prosperity in the region in the light of progress achieved in the peace process.

The European Council reiterates the Community's wish for full implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978). It reaffirms its support for Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. It calls for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and for cooperation by the parties with the United Nations forces serving there. The European Council believes that the Lebanese people should be permitted to make their views known in elections which are held under conditions guaranteed to be free and fair.